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THE CAUSE OF THE WAR:

WHO BROUGHT IT ON,

AND

FOR WHAT PURPOSE?

SPEECH OF COL. CHARLES ANDERSON,

LATE OF TEXAS,

NOW OF U. S. VOLUNTEERS.

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THE CAUSE OF THE WAR.

Mr. Anderson being at home a short time, in Dayton, where he resides, on account of illness, and having so far recovered as to be able to speak, the Xenia Union Club improved the opportunity, and invited him to address a meeting on the 2d of May, 1863. A fine audience assembled, composed of the substantial citizens of the city and vicinity, of all party predilections, and among whom were many ladies.

The chairman, in introducing Mr. Anderson, said a formal introduction was hardly necessary, as the speaker had often appeared before Xenia audiences in times past, extending over a period of twenty-five years, but since his last appearance here, he had seen and suffered much in connection with the enemies of our country, and what he had to say to-night would be based mainly on his own personal knowledge and experience.

Mr. Anderson, thus presented to his audience, said:

It is true that many times, in years gone by, I have had the pleasure of addressing you, but never on an occasion like this; and I trust the time will soon come when we need no longer dwell on the sad scenes through which our country is passing. It is more than twenty-eight years since I first harangued the people of this town, and on a subject not foreign to the present—the love of the Union, and the dangers which beset it. Many then thought that the doubts and fears, which were natural to one who loved the Union as I did, were foolish and imaginary. And I think but few, if any, of us are even now waked up, after two years of war, to the great issue which is involved in the contest. I sometimes look upon human nature in dismay, to see how unduly we estimate our privileges, and how thoughtless we are of the dangers which beset us. It does even seem that the American people would not be surprised at the sound of the

angel Gabriel's trumpet, but would go right along with the ordinary affairs of life, so soon do we become familiarized with scenes of danger and the impending ruin hanging over us. For is it not true that there is a large body of the American people who have persuaded themselves that our country—I say our country, for, whatever they may say on the other side of Dixie, surely every man on this side is interested in the whole country, and still claims his right to an interest in the whole of it—is it not true that a large portion of our people, sensible enough on most subjects, have not, even now, a clear perception of the fact that this war is a contest between ourselves, for free government, and another party which is striving to destroy us, and the interests of our children, and all generations to come after us? which is endeavoring to destroy our free institutions, and everything which makes our country respectable, which makes property useful, which makes life worth the living?

OPPOSITION TO REPUBLICAN GOVERNMENT.

They say it is an Abolition war—a war carried on for the purpose of abolishing slavery. Such is the character given to it by men of the South, and it is repeated by those who sympathize with their cause in the North; but, as I look at it, there is nothing in it but a simple contest between two great principles, which are utterly irreconcilable, which can no more exist together than fire and water. These principles are those of the free institutions of Republican Government and those of Absolutism. A government by one ruling head is a form of absolute power; military power is another form of absolute government; another is, the power of an aristocracy, an oligarchy, and this is the form in which absolutism presents itself in opposition to us. An oligarchy is now openly fighting our free institutions. To my view the war is now as plain as any highway; no tracks can be plainer; they are made deep in the path of history; every claw of the beast is as plain to me as the tracks of the savage wild beasts are to the experienced hunter. The principle of an oligarchical government, which is the most absolute form of absolutism, and the very worst, is engaged in a life contest with

that State, one of which requires them to use their influence in procuring an adjournment of this body to the 4th of April next. It is the wish of that State that opportunity may be given for full consideration of any Constitutional amendment that may be proposed here, and especially to avoid precipitate action under apprehensions of resistance to the inauguration of Mr. Lincoln on the 4th of next month.

I have already submitted resolutions in accordance with the views of the Legislature, and intended, at the proper time, to ask a vote upon the proposed adjournment. On consultation with my collegues, however, I find a majority of them averse to postponement; and, in view of the fact that the resolution of the Legislature is not imperative in its terms, and especially in consideration of the assurances constantly given here by delegates from Slaveholding States that, whatever may be the result of our deliberations, no obstruction or hindrance will be opposed to the inauguration of Mr. Lincoln, I have determined to forbear urging a vote.

Upon the respective merits of the propositions of the Committee, and the proposed amendments, I have not much to say. But what I do say will be said in all seriousness.

I do not approve the confident pledges made here of favorable action by the people of either section, or of any State upon whatever propositions may receive the sanction of this conference. The people of the Free States, so far as my observation goes, do not commit their right of judgment to any body. They generally exercise it themselves, and be assured they will exercise it freely upon any proposition coming from this body. Whatever our action may be here, every proposition to amend the Constitution must come before the people. They will discuss it, and must adopt it before it can become a part of the fundamental law. Dismiss, then, the idea that all that is necessary to secure amendments acceptable to a particular interest or section is to secure for them the sanction of a majority in this hall.

The result of the national canvass which recently terminated in the election of Mr. Lincoln has been spoken of by some as the effect of a sudden impulse, or of some irregular excitement of the popular mind; and it has been somewhat confidently as-

serted that, upon reflection and consideration, the hastily-formed opinions which brought about that election will be changed. It has been said also that subordinate questions of local and temporary character have augmented the Republican vote, and secured a majority which could not have been obtained upon the national questions involved in the respective platforms of the parties which divide the country.

I cannot take this view of the result of the Presidential election. I believe, and the belief amounts to absolute conviction, that the election must be regarded as a triumph of principles cherished in the hearts of the people of the Free States. These principles, it is true, were originally asserted by a small party only. But, after years of discussion, they have, by their own value, their own intrinsic soundness, obtained the deliberate and unalterable sanction of the people's judgment.

Chief among these principles is the Restriction of Slavery within State limits; *not* war upon Slavery within those limits, but fixed opposition to its extension beyond them. Mr. Lincoln was the candidate of the people opposed to the extension of Slavery. We have elected him. After many years of earnest advocacy and of severe trial, we have achieved the triumph of that principle. By a fair and unquestionable majority, we have secured that triumph. Do you think we, who represent this majority, will throw it away? Do you think the people would sustain us if we undertook to throw it away? I must speak to you plainly, gentlemen of the South. It is not in my heart to deceive you. I therefore tell you explicitly that if we of the North and West would consent to throw away all that has been gained in the recent triumph of our principles, the people would not sustain us, and so the consent would avail you nothing And I must tell you further, that under no inducements whatever will we consent to surrender a principle which we believe to be so sound and so important as that of restricting Slavery within State limits.

There are some things, however, which I think the people are willing to do. In all my relations with them, and these relations have been somewhat intimate, I have never discovered any desire or inclination on the part of any considerable number, to interfere with the institution of Slavery within the

North, for being imposed upon by admitting any doubt on this question.

What did they threaten to rebel for in 1820? Because Congress refused to give to Missouri representation for three-fifths of her slaves—to allow the people of the forthcoming new State to count three-fifths of their negro property as equal to a corresponding whole number of free white citizens in your free State of Ohio—to give to fifty thousand Missouri slaves the same political power as thirty thousand of your citizens possess who are a part of the Government. And this notwithstanding the fact that if you go back of that claim you will find—and they don't deny it themselves—that the fathers who made our Constitution never intended to have a new slave State. They contended that in those days the fathers of this Government were under a delusion—that they were not so wise as their descendants on this subject of slavery. But it is a fact that they actually limited, forever, by solemn compact, the bounds of slavery; it was not to be extended into any of the territory which the nation owned or ever expected to own. Still, they have gone on, from that starting-point, that slavery was to be restricted, and ultimately exterminated, and added slave State after slave State, purchasing land to do so, in violation of the Constitution. I don't say this on my own opinion merely; I state it on the authority of sound and indisputable Democratic statesmanship. Mr. Jefferson, the father of Democracy, admitted that the purchase of Louisiana, or the admission of any more slave territory, was unconstitutional. Notwithstanding this, the South added slave State after slave State, purchasing land unconstitutionally, while they could, and, when that method failed, turning highway robber, and assaulting a weaker power, stole from Mexico territory enough to still bring in a slave State for every free State admitted. I hope I don't give offence to my "Democratic" friends, and I don't care much if I do. [Applause and laughter.]

I said awhile ago that you ought to blush for being imposed upon with falsehoods, when the clear pages of history contradicted them; but you ought much more to blush for admitting that all this was right. Right, that in a Democratic, republican Government the minority shall forever keep even with the

majority? Right, that territory which was consecrated to freedom shall be given to slavery? Right, that, to extend slavery, which was limited by the fathers of the Government, land should be unconstitutionally obtained, and even stolen and fought for? Right, to do all this in order to allow slavery to keep even with freedom? I must admit that I am sometimes dismayed, not to say terrified, at this evidence of our unfitness for self-government.

HOW THE SOUTH HAS RULED THE NATION.

In 1820, when the South first menaced us with disunion, and before an Abolition petition had been presented, what was the account between the two sections? I reckon my Democratic friends will not deny that this was intended to be a Republican Government, in which all the States should enjoy equal rights and possess equal opportunities for filling its offices. But what was the result? In 1820 we had elected Presidents who had served thirty-six years. Of these, Washington, a slaveholder, had served eight; Jefferson, a slaveholder, eight years; Madison, a slaveholder, eight years; Monroe, a slaveholder, eight years; making a total of thirty-two years, which a minority had controlled a Republican Government, while the majority had control of it only four years, under John Adams. Such was the result in a Republican Government, where the majority is intended and ought to rule; and that result was brought about by the force of that institution in relation to which a provision was incorporated in the Constitution, allowing slave property to have a representative power in the Government. And because this oligarchical power, having ruled the nation since its organization in the proportion of thirty-two to four years demanded admissions and compromises which would secure to it a continuance of the monopoly, and was refused, it rebelled and began war upon us. And yet they make the pretence, and it is believed by some of you, that the war was brought on because some persons in the North interfered with their slave interests in their own States.

South Carolina had no more fear of the Lincoln Administration disturbing her slaves, than she had fears that I would interfere with the Government of any set of children that belongs to any wedded pair in this house. As to fugitive slaves, you know that the very States which lost their slaves by their escaping to the North, were those which shuddered at the idea of dissolution, and had to be driven to it, so far as they yielded to it at all; and those which proposed and urged secession, are the States which never lost slaves in this way at all. And, put them all together, they never lost as much property in this way as Northern farmers and manufacturers do by the ordinary destruction of the machinery they employ instead of slave-labor.

The real fact is, that all the time the purpose has been to change our Government from a Republic, in which the majority rules, to an oligarchy, where the minority rules; and slavery only became connected with the question, because they were ruling you by the influence of three-fifths of their slaves. They call me an Abolitionist now, but I don't vex myself on that account any more than I do on account of the miseries of the slaves. I know all about them; I know the evil of slavery, for I have felt it since the day I was born, and have studied it all my life. Consequently, I presume I abhor it worse than any of you. But while legitimately in the Union, I would tolerate it as I would tolerate a cancer in the heart. But, with the knowledge that there are a million of men arrayed with arms to break down my Government and your Government, and that slavery is held up as a barrier for their protection and defense, what does the cry of Abolition amount to? What is the destruction of slavery, compared with the perpetuity of the peace and prosperity of all the people of this nation for all time to come? Ask me to protect that shield, that black shield of slavery—say to me that I must turn my sword aside, and let it fall harmless before this bulwark of the enemy! It is all sheer cant and hypocrisy. No man is so depraved in his heart not to say, that though I might tolerate slavery in the Union for the sake of the Union, yet, when I am fighting the battles of the Union, and it becomes a shield of defense to treason, a weapon of

destruction to the Republic, the very principle which made me tolerate it then, would make me stamp it under foot now! [Great applause.]

I suppose I am called upon to respect the slavery of Cuba, or of Brazil, in our relations with those countries in time of peace; but, let Cuba become involved in war with us, or suppose Brazil at your throat, would you have me be so very careful of the slave interests of those countries? Certainly not; and I tell you that I would have far more respect for, and would show more forbearance toward, the slaves of Cuba, in a war with us, than I would toward the slaves of any rebel to his government, from Jeff. Davis down. [Applause.] And I tell you another truth, that no man who has an honest heart, or a natural love for his own home, his own family, and of that greater blessing for which he loves them all, his country, but must entertain the same sentiments. Away, then, with this cant of Abolitionism! It is only a sham, an empty pretence.

As to peace, which the Bible says is a good that passeth all understanding, I would be willing to endure a great deal to bring about a true and lasting peace; but as long as that people stand out against the Union, they must never come to me, a Union man—a man having no other religion than a love of Union—and ask me to withhold a blow aimed at them and theirs, slavery included.

SLAVERY THE LOSER BY DISUNION.

Does the South expect the people of the North to be so craven that, when their country is gone, their nationality lost, divided and subject to war in all the generations to come, they will be more abjectly servile than any other people on the globe? Do they expect that when they have made a foreign country of the North, it will be more forbearing of their evil than the rest of the nations of the earth? How has it been with England? do they ever get runaway negroes from her? I never heard of but one man who had so little sense as to go to Canada to recover runaway slaves, and he was a cousin of mine. [Laughter.] He laid all his traps well to catch him, and walked into his shop, where his "boy" greeted him with, "Why, God bless you! Master Charles, how is you! Sit down and let me shave you." He knew there was no danger, and he remained there.

Is there any slaveholder who does not know that every Christian nation abhors slavery, and that it will protect the fugitive against the pursuer? What insanity, therefore, for them to think of making a foreign nation on their borders! As long as I am on this side of the line—and I came here to be on this side, although I could have flourished down there as well as any of them—they never can persuade me to respect their institution of slavery in that pretended foreign country. When my native State becomes foreign to me, I am foreign to it; whenever it becomes a foreign enemy to my State of Ohio, I am a foreign enemy to it, and to every man in it, and to every interest in it, and especially to the interest of slavery. If that be Abolitionism, make the most of it. I am that kind of a Union man. [Voices: "So am I," "and I," "and I."] And so is every man who has brains and heart, I don't care who he is.

THE TYRANNY OF AN ARISTOCRACY.

Mr. Anderson then briefly sketched the domineering course of Southern statesmen, in the chain of compromises by which they compelled the North to foster their peculiar institution, and to give them the controlling influence in the government. They lived by these compromises only so long as they served their purposes, when they discarded them and demanded new ones. In the last speech of South Carolina, delivered to the nation on retiring from the halls of Congress, her representative said, You may do what you please, but you can't dispute the fact that the South has governed this country sixty out of the seventy-two years of its history. Everything indicates that their desire and determination was to rule, and ultimately to govern this country by an oligarchy.

I need not, in this discussion, say anything about our republican form of Government. But how is it with theirs? It is the meanest of all Governments. I know there are people in Ohio who talk about "States Rights," and rights based upon slavery, and who would like to have Jeff. Davis' dominions extended over them; but I want to know if the facts are not these: that the wisest writer on Government, in giving the qualities of different Governments, describes them thus: "The

strongest form of Government is in the Monarchy; the most honest, the Republic; the most cunning and most selfish, the Aristocracy?" Whenever you give to a few men special privileges—and that is the trouble in our contest with the slave States—they are seeking special privileges in regard to their slaves—when you give to any man an advantage in railroad or other corporations, they will take more special care of that interest than of any other. The slave States, having a privileged property, they are more diligent to expand it and seek for it protection, than men owning ordinary property. The nobleman stands by his badge because it is a badge, and not from its inherent worth, for the reason that it is a special privilege which only sixty out of sixty millions can wear.

Does every man not know that the most fearful tyrannies of the world are aristocracies? There is no tyranny so remorseless as this very form of government now seeking to throttle your national life. I have made some observations in regard to this form of government, having been twice to Europe, and to Asia and Africa once. I have suffered a little in the way of imprisonment; have seen considerable of the workings of absolute government in Turkey, Austria, and elsewhere; and I tell you that I have never in my life seen so unmitigated a despotism as the Government of the Confederate States. There is no government on the earth that has the power, or which uses it more remorselessly on independence of thought and action, than that of Jeff. Davis and his miserable cable of villains congregated at Richmond. For months and months, in the early stages of the rebellion, there was no freedom to oppose those who favored it. Look at the vote Texas and Louisiana gave for the Union; but what became of those thousands of Union men? It could not be possible they were all honestly converted to secession. No, they were subjugated, crushed down by the reign of terror which then existed, and has continued to exist to this day.

People are distressed here about a few arrests that have been made by the "tyrant Lincoln," and about not allowing free speech and a free press; but this is the mild restraint of a few dangerous traitors for a brief period. There is no comparison between them. How is it down yonder? There is no State,

except one, I believe, which has not dictated to the farmer what he shall sow, and plant, and reap. I tell you, my friends, you would think very differently of your Government if it should forbid your planting this crop or that, and say so much of your grain should belong to the Government; but this is what the new and better government of the South is doing. And, remember, that they are the Democracy of the country, and that those who arrogantly call themselves Democrats up here among you sympathize with them, that they may once more unite with them, and govern the country.

THE RACE BETWEEN FREEDOM AND SLAVERY.

The result of the contest between the principles of freedom and of absolutism amounts to simply this: they of the oligarchical persuasion modestly ask our people, in this race, to be handicapped. Excuse my illustration; I always try to compare everything by the horse, for he is an animal I am extremely fond of, and in days gone by was familiar with racing customs. "Handicapping" consists in equalizing the ability of horses about to run a race; that is, it is a trick by which, if your horse is twice as fast as mine, twice as much weight is put upon him as upon mine. Thus, if I should enter a mule or a jackass against your fleet horse, the game would be to put but a few pounds on the jackass, and a hundred pounds on your swift courser, so as to enable the jackass to keep up. Now, in this nineteenth century of the Christian era the plain proposition of these Southern people is, that you shall let down the educational standard of the North, your religion, your industry, your enterprise, your democratic principles, your freedom, until you shall be handicapped to the rate of speed, at which the misbegotten, rickety, blind institution of slavery can travel. [Great applause and laughter.] Is it anything else? You may state the subject, and argue the question anew, until you grow gray, and the result will be the same—they demand that you shall be handicapped and hamstrung down to their capacity to keep even with you, that the minority shall always be equal to the majority.

Mr. Anderson then referred to his experiences with the K. G. C.'s in Texas, in which they boldly admitted that this was the

nature of the contest, and proclaimed their superior qualifications, and their determination to rule. The politicians of the South—the leaders in the rebellion—unblushingly declare that free institutions have been tried and found wanting. Is this the principle that the Democracy of Ohio feel themselves bound to sympathize with, and are these the men whose peculiar rights they ask us to respect? If so, and they are ready to fight and die for them, as they declare they are, the sooner they die the better, but let it be by hanging! [Applause.]

THE RIGHT OF THE SOUTH TO GOVERN THE NORTH.

The speaker, having shown by the history of events, by the uniform conduct of the South toward the North, and by the character of the so-called Confederate Government, their disposition to rule, and to make the Government conform to their wishes, proceeded to close his remarks by substantiating his positions, from the words of a leading Southern author, who wrote in the *Southern Literary Messenger*, and who was indorsed by the conductors of the *Plantation*, the only Quarterly of the South, in which his article was republished in September, 1860. The writer says:

"A contest of *race* exists at present, between the people of this Government. The postulate, then, now sought to be established is, that the *Southern* people in the main—in other words the *representative* blood of the South—comes of that branch of the human race which, at this time, controls all the enlightened nations of the earth." "That stand-point is to be found, and we think only to be found, in the *ethnological superiority* of that race to which the Southern people, in the main, belong, their particular capacity for *executive control* and ther control of this particular institution of slavery." "The Puritans, at home, constituted, as a class, the common people of England. * * * But, so little of that, which it pleases us to speak of as *executive capacity* did they possess, that after the death of Cromwell there seemed to be left nothing of the element of control; * * * the result of which was a peaceful relapse of the whole people into their former subjection to the Norman rule."

Speaking of the Northern people, the descendants of these Puritans, the writer says:

"*Being inherently destitute of capacity for control, they are unable to imbue their legislation with those elements which command obedience.* * * * On the contrary, the *Southern* mind, when left to its normal working, is disposed to quiet and to gentleness, coming to conclusions by the almost instinctive application of the simplest rules; yet, when roused to action, capable of almost incredible effort, and equal to the highest flight of genius. Naturally generous, Southerners exercise much forbearance, till the question of honor is raised, and then they rush to the sword; accustomed to enforce obedience when it is due, they readily yield it when their position and duty require it; fierce and fearless in a contest, yet just, generous and gentle in command, *they possess every quality necessary* to rule the Northern people. * * The Northern people have many great traits of character and intellect, * * still *they require control*, and the Southern people of this country possess the capacity, the position and the power to do so, if they are only true to themselves."

This *capacity* of the Southern people to rule, says the writer, comes from the fact that "the Southern States were settled and governed, in a great measure, under the supervision of the *Crown*, immediately by and under the direction of persons belonging to the blood and race of the reigning family, and belonged to that stock recognized as CAVALIERS, who were the royalists in the time of Charles I. The Southern people come of that race, who, to-day, sit upon all the thrones of enlightened Europe, and give law to the millions. They are of that race who have established law, order, and government over the earth. They come of that race to whom law and order, obedience and command, are convertible terms, and who *do* command, the world over, whether the subject be African or Caucasion, Celt or Saxon."

Now, a thought or two and I will close. With these claims of a natural right of race and blood to rule the people of the North, they have what? The sympathy of that portion of the people of the North calling themseves Democrats. Is this Democracy? It is not Democracy of better days: it is not the

Democracy of Jackson, but the spurious sentiment of Calhoun, who stole the name with which to christen his own anti-republican notions.

I end as I began. This contest is actual war; it is a conflict between republican freedom and the assumption of an oligarchy to rule over us. Shall I sympathize with them? Shall I forbear toward them? Never while powder will inflame, lead be made to fly, or steel to cut. I would as soon spare an adder's fangs. You call this cruelty? It is the cruelty which made martyrs of the early Christian fathers; it made heroes of our Revolutionary fathers. Sacrifice? Sacrifice everything rather than submit yourselves slaves. Suffer? Suffer all, rather than descend from freedom to become menials and serfs to heartless masters. Others may do differently, but I shall be slow to believe there are many on this side of the line who will stand out, in action, word, or sympathy, when they understand all the truth, for the oligarchy of the South.

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